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Fifty Grand for Killer Doc

BY MARTA RUSSELL

Jack Kevorkian and death row lawyer Bryan Stevenson both received the humanist Gleitsman Foundation Citizen Activist Award in Cambridge on April 10. The dual award this year was post-ironic. Kevorkian, whose book "Prescription: Medicide" advocates live medical experimentation on death row inmates and the harvesting of their organs, shared the $100,000 award with Equal Justice Initiative founder/executive director Bryan Stevenson, who was rightly recognized for his career-long fight against the death penalty. Disabled groups can't help but be outraged that one awardee was honored for taking the lives of over 100 disabled persons, the other for saving the lives of inmates on Death Row.

This year's judges, listed by the Gleitsman foundation, formed a veritable pantheon of top drawer liberals: Pulitzer Prize-winning writer and psychiatrist Dr. Robert Coles, actor and environmentalist Ted Danson, civil rights attorney Morris Dees Jr., children's advocate Marian Wright Edelman, Mothers Against Drunk Driving founder Candace Lightner, political activist and philanthropist Stanley K. Sheinbaum and feminist Gloria Steinem.

Not Dead Yet, a group of disabled activists which has watchdogged Kevorkian's sinister activities down the years, thought that perhaps the humanist judges might be lacking an education on their subject. The group sent letters to each judge, to Foundation president Alan Gleitsman and to Bryan Stevenson in an attempt to close any possible information gap.

Not Dead Yet explained that in the late 1950s Kevorkian wrote articles, lobbied legislators, and contacted death row prisoners proposing that death row inmates be offered a "choice" — a difficult execution by whatever means the state offered, or an easy execution, by means of general anesthesia. There was one catch: in Kevorkian's plan, death would not be immediate. Rather, the anesthesia would be given at a sub-lethal dose while surgical procedures and experiments would be carried out on the "patient". After the hours or days needed to complete the experiment, if the "patient" was still alive, the dosage would be increased to lethal levels.

Realizing that he would not win the right to perform live human experimentation and organ-harvesting on death-row inmates, Kevorkian moved on to a group he perceived as easier targets: people with disabilities. Kevorkian states that public acceptance of assisted suicide and euthanasia is an essential first step to advancing his agenda of experimenting on living people and extracting their organs.

Further investigation by Not Dead Yet disclosed that in a medical journal article ("The Last Fearsome Taboo: Medical Aspects of Planned Death") Kevorkian again outlined these gruesome goals in connection with death row prisoners, as well as adults with Alzheimer's and babies with spina bifida.

Dr. Robert Coles, a Gleitsman Board member, noted Harvard psychiatrist and well-known author wrote back to NDY, "I'm not at all in favor of the way Dr. Kevorkian has behaved, or what he has advocated, and have made clear to my medical colleagues my point of view, as I did to an important member of the Gleitsman Foundation before the award was to be made." The award to Kevorkian, it seems, was not a case of ill-informed liberals making a choice unwittingly.

The foundation says that it supports the right of terminally ill patients to a physician-assisted death. A terminal illness

(**Killer Doc** continued on page 6)

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Our Little Secrets

Moms, Guns, Cops

One of the refrains of the Million Mom March on May 14 was intoned by President Bill in his weekly radio gig the day before—something to the effect of "let's keep guns out of the wrong hands". That Mother's Day afternoon on the Mall, amid affecting testimonials of tragedy-through-guns, two CounterPunchers spotted a teenager carrying this sign: "My father abused me and still got to keep his 49 guns." The girl had come to Washington from Morristown, N.J. with her mom whose own sign, without her daughter's economy of phrase, spoke of restraining orders, the flouting of same and the 49 guns.

The abusive father/husband had never shot his wife and daughter but, the twosome told our CounterPunchers, had used the guns, thus to have his way. As the mother was describing the years of torment with a man who sounded like a monster almost from day one of their marriage, a CounterPuncher asked, "How did you meet this guy?" They were in Beaver County, Pennsylvania; she'd been abused herself as a child; he seemed strong, confident; "I thought he'd be my protector."

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"What did he do for a living?"

"He was a police officer."

As it happens, police officers, mustered in the nation's capital for their annual reunion, were rampaging through town as the million moms slept the night before the march. The drinking started even before the cops hit Washington, with a beefy group seen purchasing cases of Bud from Amtrak's café car en route from New York. Washington hotel rooms became keg parties (though kegs are not allowed in most hotels), where these officers of the peace grew rowdy and destructive as frat boys, frightening hotel staff who couldn't do much in response.

"Who am I going complain to?" a cabbie rhetorically asked the Counter-Punchers. He'd carried several loads of cops that night, and twice they left his cab without paying. "And vulgar! I've never heard such language. The worst jokes about women, about their wives! Total disrespect." This cabbie said there was a report over the taxi two-way radio that a gang of cops went to an area favored by prostitutes and, sparing themselves the niceties of a straight-up commercial exchange, pulled a woman into a jeep and gang raped her. This was an unconfirmed report, as the driver reiterated several times, but the action described was fully in line with the violent, ugly talk he'd heard from his passengers.

Off-duty police were among the pro-gun countermarchers that Sunday along with Constitutionalists (one wearing britches and a tricorn) and furious mothers pushing strollers festooned with American flags and signs saying "I wasn't raped because I had a gun". This march was sponsored by Sisters for the Second Amendment. Many of the Sisters clearly seemed to take the mass shoot-out approach to violence and, like their more pacific counterparts among the million moms, seem a whole lot more concerned about the guns than about the violence at the core of American life.

The CounterPunchers closed out their day in Washington with a chat with one of the Sisters, dressed entirely in Old Glory stars and stripes and wearing round her neck a cross and a peace symbol. "Why the peace symbol?" "Oh, I'm an old hippie." The Sister spoke fondly of her communal days in rural south-west Virginia. "And so, were you against the Vietnam war?" "Oh yes! That was a terrible war and the worst thing about it was that the people in Washington and in Congress were never honest with us. They didn't want to win that war. They just wanted to make big money for themselves and their friends." The Sister discoursed on how, with these betrayers back home, our American boys were left to fight with one hand tied behind their back.

"Well," said a CounterPuncher, "our boys did do a pretty good job, even with one hand. They did destroy Vietnam and kill two million people." Unmoved, the Sister declaimed about the evils of communism and insisted, "We could have won that war if we'd wanted to. We just didn't try hard enough."

Those "Hate Crimes"

Here at CounterPunch we don't care for the current bellowing by some liberal groups for more "hate crime" laws. It's an odious form of special-constituency grandstanding. People who commit the same crime should be in line for the same punishment regardless of race or preference. Deeds, not thoughts. Equal justice under the law should be the standard. So we note with interest a press release from the Libertarian Party which claims that while such hate crime laws have been touted as a way to protect minorities against violent white racists, the actual result has been the exact opposite. Blacks are twice as likely as whites to be charged with a "hate crime."

From data in a National Crime Victimization Survey, published by the U.S. Department of Justice, we find 2,336 whites were charged with anti-black "hate" crimes in 1997, while 718 blacks were charged with anti-white crimes.

So, adjusting for the fact that blacks make up just 13 per cent of the population, they were statistically twice as likely as whites to face prosecution for hate crimes. As the Libertarians points out, laws that were supposed to stop racism apparently have racist consequences — making hate crime laws themselves a hate crime against blacks.

Chicken a la Clark

A Friend of CounterPunch informs us that, despite the overall futility of the

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bombing campaign in Kosovo last year, the bombers did manage to hit one class of target with frequent and unerring accuracy: chicken coops. The tin-roofed hen houses appeared to have some military significance to excited pilots three miles above, and the warmth exuded by the innocently roosting poultry was sufficient to guide in heat-seeking missiles. According to a source who spent the conflict inside Kosovo, "the whole place stank of dead chicken".

PLANET GREEN-E?

In Delaware grassroots greens appeared poised on the brink of a mighty victory against the power companies and the incineration industry. After years of hard work, they had assembled a coalition behind a measure moving through the Delaware statehouse that would ban incinerators within three miles of a school. With support from churches, school districts and greens, the bill looked like it had a good chance of passing. Then Delaware governor Thomas Carper and key legislators were hit by letters from three mainstream environmental groups attacking the bill: Environmental Defense Fund, Natural Resources Defense Council and Union of Concerned Scientists.

These three groups, all part of a scheme called Green-E, which certifies supposedly environmentally-benign sources of power, were distraught that the measure might undermine one of their pet projects: biomass energy plants. Biomass plants burn wood, manure and other garbage to generate energy. Green-E is joined at the hip to Philpower Corporation, a big electric company, to build a "construction and demolition wood" incinerator/power plant in northern Delaware. Already opposed by local communities, the plant would be doomed if the anti-incinerator bill were to pass.

In his letter to Governor Caster, the Union of Concerned Scientists' Allan Nogee, who sits on Green-E's board of directors and helps decide which plants will get the lucrative Green-E certification, carped that the incinerator bill "would classify any facility that burns wood or other clean organic wastes as an incinerator and subject such facilities to stringent siting requirements". Of course, those stringent siting requirements are exactly what most greens have been working to achieve for decades.

Nogee attacked Delaware greens, accusing them of scare tactics and of "blurring distinctions between clean wood and other sources of biomass through the generic label of incineration."

The rubbish going into those burners will be far from clean. Even by Philpower's own calculations more than 20 per cent (96 million pounds a year) of the trash will be composed of "foreign matter" (such as staples, nails, and plastic) and other debris that the company says will contain lead, paint and asbestos. In addition, Philpower's permit application admits that at least 5 per cent of the wood is likely to have been treated with toxic and cancer-causing chemicals, such as creosote, pentachlorophenol, arsenic and chromium.

Nogee's letter has been widely circulated amongst Delaware legislators by Philpower's chief lobbyist, Robert Maxwell who, so local activists tell us, has also succeeded in keeping the Sierra Club on the sidelines on this matter.

"It's sad to see the environmental community fronting for the incineration industry," says Allen Muller, director of Green Delaware. One of the biggest players in the Green-E coalition is an independent power company called Green Mountain Energy. Green Mountain is owned by the Wiley brothers of Houston, Texas. These are the men who bought ads in New York attacking John McCain and promoting George W. Bush's frail environmental record.

The warmth exuded by the innocently roosting poultry was sufficient to guide in heat-seeking missiles.

GLADIATOR: THE REAL STORY

Impressionable types may go and see Gladiator thinking they are getting just as fine a classical education as those who absorbed their Roman history via Spartacus, Ben Hur, The Fall of the Roman Empire and Eddie Cantor's Roman Scandals. To them CounterPunch says: don't bother. This is an epic that can't even make the Colosseum look full and asserts that the Roman Senate was elected by the people.

In accordance with CounterPunch's sacred motto, therefore, here are the real facts and names.

Marcus Aurelius, the old fellow with a white beard who dies early in themovie, was indeed a real emperor. A dreamy type, he was the only person in the empire who didn't notice that his wife, Faustina was, according to Gibbon, "as much celebrated for her gallantries as for her beauty", in other words, the town bike. Even after she died, MA insisted that she be worshipped as a goddess of chastity. Commodus, the villain in Gladiator, started off ok and only became a Bad Emperor when his sister Lucilla, sent someone to stab him. He survived the attack and had Lucilla killed, but understandably the experience left him a mite paranoid.

While his father liked to spend his leisure hours working on his (boring) Meditations, Commodus himself was more of a jock, fighting as a gladiator no less than seven hundred and thirty five times (the other guy was usually given a lead sword). He was also a terrific shot with a bow and arrow, displaying a neat trick of chopping off an ostrich's head with a crescent-shaped arrow head. After twelve years of this sort of thing he finally came to a bad end when Marcia, his girlfriend, drugged his wine and then had him strangled in his sleep.

Commodus was succeeded by a technocrat, Pertinax, who looked like he would be a Good Emperor but didn't last long because the Praetorian Guards killed him in a fit of pique and then, in a move equaled only by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the 1980 US presidential election, auctioned off the imperial throne to the highest bidder. Pertinax's father-in-law tried to make the deal, but was outbid by Didius Julianus, a wealthy senator, who was talked into the idea by his wife and daughter.

Straightforward purchase of the office of chief executive was less kindly regarded then than now, and a powerful movement for campaign finance reform spread across the empire. Didius only had 66 days in which to enjoy the job before a Libyan general named Septimius Severus arrived in Rome with his army, chopped off Didius' head in the palace bathroom, and became emperor himself.

Footnote: In early 1992, we heard Clinton say that Marcus Aurelius's Meditations was his favorite book. From that day forth, we knew our man for what he was. CP

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The DOJ Gave Him $4 Million

Antiwar.com Meets the New McCarthyism

Back in April CounterPunch was invited to an Anti-war.com day-long event in San Mateo, down the peninsula from San Francisco. We were a left presence at an event organized to show that opponents of US wars range across the political spectrum. We were happy to go and tell the crowd our take on things, from the bombing of Serbia, to the sanctions against Iraq, to our view that capitalism has an inherent need for wars. We were given a friendly hearing by the crowd, many of them from the libertarian slice of the political spectrum.

We'd met the Antiwar.com folks a year earlier, at a meeting organized by Socialist Action, protesting the bombing of Serbia. We thought then, as we think now, that we may disagree with much of their economic outlook, but if Antiwar.com wants to protest bombing workers' homes in Belgrade and the starving of Iraqi kids under US sanctions policy, then on these issues we like them a lot better than the Virtue-through-Bombs crowd that made up all but thirty or so of the Democratic caucus in the House of Reps last year. And their website has a very useful links page, once again running across the spectrum.

It's not escaped the attention of the Democratic Party that antiwar and anti-WTO alliances stretch across the board. Here at CounterPunch we've been following the readiness with which supposedly "liberal" watchdogs are now trying to demonize such alliances and ad hoc coalitions. Six weeks ago we reported Morris Dees's outfit saying, without a shred of evidence, that the neo-Nazis were out in full force and exerting great influence in the anti-WTO protests in Seattle.

And now we find another "liberal" watchdog, heavily financed by the Justice Department, casually stigmatizing as "militia-related" an outfit like Antiwar.com. To have the militia label hung round one's neck these days is no laughing matter.

Here's a report on the matter by Cletus Nelson.

Mark Pitcavage wears two hats and from this fact stems his malign potential. On the one hand this Ohio-based academic is employed as a full-time senior associate researcher by the Institute for Intergovernmental Relations, a non-profit orga nization which provides training services to federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. Pitcavage's job is to head the research department of the Institute's State/Local Anti-Terrorism Training (SLATT) Program. From the US Justice Department, funnelled through the Institute, SLATT has gotten since 1997 no less than $4 million, according to the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA), with the money supposedly devoted to the training of law enforcement officials in how to recognize and combat domestic terrorism.

So in his capacity as research director for SLATT Pitcavage can provide officially dignified "intelligence information" to law enforcement. But in his private capacity Pitcavage also maintains a personal website called "The Militia Watchdog", where he maintains a list of outfits he deems to be militia-related.

To give an example, Pitcavage attacked Waco: Rules of Engagement in a New York Times article last September, defending the conduct of the FBI. The article identified him only as "a historian who specializes in right-wing extremist groups" and operator of the Militia Watchdog website, without also stating that Pitcavage makes his full-time living through a grant from the Department of Justice.

To be stigmatized these days as "militia-related" is no laughing matter.

So is Pitcavage using information from DoJ files to which he has access in his SLATT capacity to flesh out his speculations on his personal website? And is this self-styled "militia watchdog" importing his personal feuds and piques into government intelligence files which are of course mostly filled with garbage anyway. Piss off Pitcavage and you could find yourself denounced on CNN as a terrorist.

Pitcavage's expanding purview isn't limited to Christian patriots and neo-Nazis. He has begun monitoring the political activities of law-abiding 2nd Amendment advocates, libertarian groups, and most recently, the popular on-line forum for bipartisan opponents of US intervention known as Antiwar.com.

While the notion of equating principled opposition to Clinton's cluster-bomb compassion with sagebrush rebellion sounds ludicrous, Pitcavage justifies his conduct by ominously declaring that Antiwar.com is "essentially an isolationist right-wing libertarian site". The implication of this tendentious statement is obvious: behind the anti-war rhetoric lurks the Rough Beast.

The relationship between Pitcavage's pubblic and private roles poses the question whether his recent posting of Antiwar.com on his personal website was done to please his federal paymasters. Eric Garris, director of Antiwar.com says he wouldn't be surprised if this was part of a concerted attempt by the DOJ to discredit his organization. "The tactics of the Clinton administration are to attack the ability of his opponents to speak openly," Garris observes. Despite the bipartisan tone of the site, Garris says allegations of right-wing extremism are frequent. "We constantly are getting that sort of thing."

Garris isn't alone. Anarchist Bill White, onetime Media coordinator for the Utopian Anarchist Party (UAP), was amazed to see the anti-authoritarian political faction appear on Pitcavage's web page alongside various rightist groups. "He lists all kinds of groups that really shouldn't be there", he observes. White theorizes that a column by Antiwar.com columnist Justin Raimondo assailing Pitcavage for his self-serving attempts to downplay FBI skullduggery during the 1993 WACO siege provided the impetus for the group's new classification. "When you write something like that and Pitcavage sees it, he adds your name to the list", White says. From a civil libertarian perspective, these machinations by an asset of the federal government to "expose" and denounce constitutionally protected political speech advertise a highly sinister trend. CP

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Clinton's Pet Snoops

BY WAYNE MADSEN

More than ever before, Americans are concerned about personal privacy. They have every reason. Internet surfers leave electronic trails of digital data about their buying, travel, reading, and sexual habits that circling bands of direct marketing vultures are only too ready to pick apart and consume. The Clinton/Gore administration walks and talks like born-again privacy advocates. However, when one peers under the rock that the administration claims to be its "progressive" privacy policy, repellent bottom feeders come into view.

One major personal data collector is Axciom, a huge data-mining company that has amassed 20 million unlisted consumer phone numbers and routinely sells them to direct marketers. As a personal data reseller, Axciom combines the phone numbers with other personal data culled from sources such as the Internet. The result is a vast electronic dossier, available to nosy telemarketers. Axciom is headquartered in Conway, Arkansas. After seven years of dealing with various Arkansas swindlers and political shysters who descended upon the nation's capital after Clinton's election, it behoves us to be inquisitive about such a firm's link to the administration's policy-making machine.

Founded in 1975, Axciom now maintains one of the world's largest reservoirs of personal information. Axciom's chief executive officer is 55-year-old Charles Morgan, a bona fide "Friend of Bill". Shortly after Clinton's election in 1992, Morgan told the Direct Marketing Association's trade periodical DM News that Clinton would be a good friend of the direct marketing industry. He said Clinton "has been a strong supporter of our company and is a very strong proponent of companies like ours, which are information-based, and I would perceive him to be even-handed and rational about our industry."

Morgan, who had been appointed to a number of Arkansas state commissions by then-governor Clinton, has advised Clinton on a number of issues relating to the direct marketing industry. None of this advice has been good for the cause of privacy in the United States.

Although Morgan was thankfully not named chairman of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), his advice to Clinton has been extremely apparent. In the face of (perhaps because of) overwhelming evidence that this policy does not work, "self-regulation" by the direct-marketing industry has been a cornerstone of Clinton policy. The FTC continues to insist that industry can police itself. This absurd stance is supported by a number of industry shills who have wormed their way into administration positions, including some in the White House.

Axciom maintains one of the world's largest reservoirs of personal information. Its CEO is Charles Morgan, a bona fide "FOB".

It is noteworthy that this policy has resulted in threats of a data embargo being imposed by the more privacy-conscious Europeans against the United States. In reaction, the Clinton administration has acted as straightforward lobbyist for the direct marketing industry in obstructing Europe's attempts to protect its citizens' personal information from the data vultures in the United States. A traveling band of Commerce Department officials have been using tax-payers' money to strong-arm politicians and bureaucrats across Europe. Their efforts have largely failed.

During the changeover from Bush to Clinton in 1992, the Direct Marketing Association (of which Axciom has always been a major player) was actually involved with Clinton's presidential transition team. In the lead up to Clinton's inauguration, the DMA noted Clinton's long association with direct mailing campaigns in Arkansas. Such campaigns included the targeting of investors with solicitations to invest in retirement properties in places like Whitewater and Castle Grande.

In Arkansas, Morgan started a group called the "Good Suit Club," a loose-knit association of business people dedicated to public-private partnerships to improve education and create jobs. Morgan and his friends supported a number of Governor Clinton's initiatives. This was just the kind of group both Clintons favored. Morgan's "Good Suits" also included Jackson Stephens, the chairman of Stephens Inc., an investor in Little Rock's Worthen Bank along with the now notorious Riadys of Indonesia. Add to the club Craig T. Smith, who would become Clinton's White House political director at the height of the Lewinsky scandal. Smith later chaired the Washington-based and direct mail-intensive Gore 2000 campaign until the Veep moved his headquarters to Nashville in October 1999

The FTC and FCC have consistently claimed that the Axciom's compilations and trafficking in unlisted phone numbers are not illegal. Knowing of the close ties between Axciom and Clinton this should come as no surprise. The Axciom-Clinton connection will be with us for a long time to come. The Little Rock downtown development authorities are currently planning two new additions to the city's vista: a brand new building that will serve as Axciom's corporate headquarters with the nearby Clinton Presidential Library in its shadow. CP

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is defined as a life expectancy of six months or less, but researchers at Wayne State University found that over 70 per cent of the people who have died in Kevorkian's hands were not terminally ill.

Janet Adkins, who had recently been diagnosed with Alzheimer's, was reported to have played tennis the week before her appointment with Kevorkian. Judith Curren had chronic fatigue, was depressed and had filed domestic abuse charges against her husband two weeks before her killing. What, then, is humanism to the Gleitsman Foundation? Is it humanist (or even defensible) to be willing to step in and "help" an obviously depressed 43-year-old woman to her death when she was diagnosed with MS (non-terminal) and then abandoned by a husband who also took her children? That is what Kevorkian did to the vulnerable Sherry Miller who needed anti-depressants and a good lawyer, not a visit with Kevorkian.

Is it humanist to assist a quadriplegic (non-terminal) to his death, do a botched job taking out his kidneys, and then dump him at a hospital doorstep? That is what Kevorkian and/or his associates did to Joseph Tushkowski. The Oakland County's medical examiner called Tushkowski's body a "scene from a slaughterhouse". No doubt this was practice for the organ harvesting scheme.

Is it humanist to assist in the suicide of a disabled man who has been waiting for nine agonizing months for a wheelchair from his horrible HMO? That is what Kevorkian did to Matt Johnson. Johnson's wheelchair came the day after Kevorkian's visit - one day too late to free him from his seemingly permanent bed-ridden state and the actual permanent state of death.

Two past recipients of a Gleitsman award, disability activists Blane and Mark Beckwith of Berkeley joined in the letter campaign. Laura Hershey, writer and disabled feminist wrote to Gleitsman judge Gloria Steinem "The majority of Kevorkian's victims were women, and the overwhelming majority of them were disabled and not terminally ill... Typically, they had chronic conditions and disabilities — some much less severe than my own physical disability. These individuals needed support services, appropriate health care, understanding family members and friends, and opportunities to connect with other disabled people who could relate to their struggles and affirm their worth.

The medical examiner called Tushkowski's body a "scene from a slaughterhouse".

Kevorkian's Written Statement to Court (August, 1990, cited in State of Michigan v. Kevorkian, Circuit Court for the county of Oakland) makes his intent much clearer. He wrote: "[T]he voluntary self-elimination of individual and mortally diseased or crippled lives taken collectively can only *enhance* the preservation of public health and welfare." (Italics in original) By dignifying Kevorkian with this Citizen Activist Award, the Gleitsman Foundation aligns humanism with the eugenicists, social Darwinists, and Malthusian population control zealots who target disabled lives.

The Boston Herald reported that this year Harvard, originally scheduled to hold the event, sidled away from the awards and moved the event to the Charles Hotel in Cambridge. Stanley Sheinbaum, a well known Los Angeles liberal Democrat, wrote that "I am on the board, but I did not vote for Kevorkian. I was not happy with the outcome of that..." Dees has said that he did not nominate Kevorkian and would pass these concerns on to the Gleitsman officials but that he would not "resign the minor advisory role I have over Dr. Kevorkian." Later, Dees changed his mind and resigned. Gleitsman defended the choice of Kevorkian, choosing to retain him as an image of humanism and a martyr for the right to die movement rather than acknowledge his ghastly deficiencies. Steinem, Danson, and Edelman never responded.

Not Dead Yet protested the awards dinner on April 10. Marta Russell' is the author of "Beyond Ramps: Disability at the End of the Social Contract" (Common Courage Press, 1998). CP

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Why Do Liberals Love Dr. Kervorkian?

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